

# SIGN of the TIME

December 1, 2011– January 31, 2012



Iowa Department of Human Rights



Office of Deaf Services

We would like to share an announcement about the contractual interpreting program. At the last DSCI Commission meeting, held Saturday, November 19, 2011, the Commission made the following change to contractual interpreting requests through June 30, 2012. Requests for contractual interpreting funds will be limited to \$100 per request, down from \$150 previously allowed. Because there have been 21 requests since mid-July, 2011, the fund has already used over half of the allotted \$5,000. In order to extend the funds available, the Commission decided to lower the allowable funding in order to be able to cover as many requests as possible through the end of the fiscal year. Once the remaining funds have run out, requests will be denied until the next fiscal year beginning July 1, 2012. If you have any questions, please feel free to call our office.

## **Department of Human Rights (DHR) Office:**

The DHR has reconfigured the office area on 2nd floor of the Lucas Building. When you come in through the double doors you will see a receptionist's desk. Please stop at the desk, sign in and you will be directed to the Office of Deaf Services. Linda Scott, our office secretary, will be greeting you as you enter. The Office of Deaf Services has not changed location and our telephone number will remain the same.

## **Commission Meetings:**

Do you know that we have DSCI Commission meetings four (4) times a year? August, November, February and May and they are open to the public. The general public is encouraged to attend the meetings to find out what we have been doing and our future plans. DSCI staff and Commissioners are open to receiving the general public's feedback and comments. You will probably see some of the Commissioners at the Deaf Clubs, or other events in your area. Please feel free to talk with them and they, then, can bring the report to share with us at the commission meetings.

## **Who are our DSCI Commissioners?**

Theresa Legg, Chair, Ely

Nathaniel Garrels, Vice Chair, Emmetsburg

August Cordero, Deaf Representative, Pleasant Hill

Tina Kastendieck, At Large Public Representative, Fort Dodge

Jennifer Keaton, Deaf Representative, Mount Vernon

Dr. James Snyder, Hard of Hearing Representative, Dubuque

Robert Vizzini, Deaf Representative, Fairfax

Visit DSCI website: [www.deafservices.iowa.gov](http://www.deafservices.iowa.gov) Questions or Comments? Email us: [dhr.dsci@iowa.gov](mailto:dhr.dsci@iowa.gov)

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Check the DSCI website for further details on upcoming Commission meeting dates, locations, etc. If internet service is not available to you, please contact our office to request the information or check with the Commissioners in your area.

Our next Commission meeting will be: **Saturday, February 25, 2012, 1:00– 4:00 p.m.—Altoona Public Library, 700 8th Street SW, Altoona, IA**

We have asked the DSCI Commissioner to take turns writing an article for E-News. These articles are written to share information with you, the community, and other interested individuals or even ask the community to with them and our staff. The first article appears below from Commissioner Cordero.

## **Commissioner, August Cordero's Report:**

As a Commissioner with DSCI, I want to emphasize that I've spent a great deal of time reflecting on the current situation with Deaf Services Commission of Iowa (DSCI). I've attended commission meetings and have had a chance to reflect on where we are at in the State level regarding Deaf Services.

As you know, the governmental climate has experienced many changes at both the State and Federal level. Budgetary concerns have impacted all areas of government and public service agencies. Despite having lost two DSCI employees, we still have one person working full time for DSCI. However, despite the efforts of several people, including myself, to enlighten government personnel with information about the need for services for Deaf people in the State of Iowa, it seems that budgetary constraints make it easy for governmental staff to elect to share the funds with other larger community members in other various agencies and offices.

It is imperative that we remind the legislators and officials that Deaf people in Iowa are homeowners, landowners, and taxpayers too. It would be of paramount importance for them to recognize that equity must be upheld in the face of budgetary limitations. Thus, it is my great concern and hope that we be able to retain funds for services for Deaf persons in our great state.

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After all, it stands to benefit not only Deaf individuals in our state, but also makes it much more efficient when dealing with Deaf persons in various circumstances by providing the facilitated communication opportunities through interpreters and other services that DSCI provides.

It is very easy for governmental agencies to overlook these issues because the Deaf community hasn't been "banging pans" or "shaking fits" to stir up awareness. It is true that deafness happens to be considered a low incidence situation. However, the fact remains that there are many Deaf people in the state of Iowa who desperately depend on these services. Let me remind everyone that, yes, while deafness is a "low incidence" disability, it is, nonetheless, a profound disability which is very much in need of governmental support, as well as it being a unique culture and community. Granted, some other linguistic immigrant groups may present with larger numbers and percentages within the overall population, it is very important that Deaf Services NOT be overlooked or revenue support be reduced or diminished. Submitted by DSCI Commissioner, Gus Cordero, M.S.C

## **The Legislators are coming up January 2012**

Think about how you really want to see the state of Iowa improve in providing for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community on such things as hearing aids, insurance, Children's Bill of Rights, mental health and other issues. Remember, you decide what type of advocacy best suits your personality and comfort level. You can write, phone or talk face-to-face with your legislators. Talk to your friends or DSCI Commissioners and ask them to support/help each other to make a call, write/e-mail or contact your legislator. Also, you can ask your legislator to meet and talk about issues over coffee or visit them at the Capitol. Invite your legislator to local events, an open house or plan discussions with friends or Deaf Clubs. How do you find your local legislators? Go to the Iowa Legislature website at [www.legis.iowa.gov](http://www.legis.iowa.gov). You will see in the left column, type your address or zip to find out who your Senator is or Representative is. If you need our assistance in finding your legislator, we will be more than happy to help you.

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Office of Deaf Services

That's what I'm talking about

**HAMILTON**  
relay

## Information from Relay Service:

Relay Iowa educates businesses on being relay friendly. There are several ways a business could benefit from a Relay Friendly Business training:

- \*Learn how to make and receive relay calls
- \*Reminder to staff not to hang up on relay customers
- \*Provide better customer service to those in the community who are deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing or who have difficulty speaking
- \*Business is listed on Relay Iowa's website under "Relay Friendly Business Directory" for free!
- \*Business receives window decal and certificate of completion after training is complete

To learn more about this program, contact Lori Sporrer, Relay Iowa Project Manager at 712-653-2440 or [lori.sporrer@hamiltonrelay.com](mailto:lori.sporrer@hamiltonrelay.com)

Relay Friendly  
**Business**

Please  
**don't**  
**hang up**  
on me.

**Become a Relay Friendly Business**  
Relay calls are from individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, or have difficulty speaking. By becoming a relay friendly business you'll discover that relay users are customers with money to spend.

- Answering relay calls can mean **increased revenue**
- Answering relay calls can **increase the number of customers you serve**
- Answering relay calls can result in the **recommendation of your business to others**



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Congratulations Kathy Miller on becoming the IAD president. We are looking forward to working with Kathy and all IAD members as well. Kathy and I are working on having Deaf Education Day March 6, 2012, with the students from Iowa School for the Deaf. More detailed information will be posted at a later date.

Many of you know that I'm the only staff person with DSCI. If I overlook something, please let me know. I will do my best working to the community's satisfaction. Thank you for your patience and your continued support of DSCI. I appreciate it. I also thank Linda Scott, our office secretary for her hard work within DSCI. I do not know what I'd do without her. Bless you, Linda.

## Mark your Calendars

**December 17, 2011: CRAD 30th Annual Christmas Dinner/Party** at Hiawatha Community Center, 101 Emmons St, opens 5:30 pm, catered dinner 6-7, Program/ Santa 7-8 then Guest Speaker-Steve Brunelle-Project Endeavor; also will have Deaf balloon man for children.

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**February 4, 2012: Iowa Association of the Deaf, Board meeting**, hosted by Council Bluffs Silent Club, 536 Bluff St, Council Bluffs, IA, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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**February 25, 2012 : 1-4 p.m. ,DSCI Commission Meeting**, Altoona Public Library, 700—8th St. SW, Altoona.



*Happy Holiday and all the best in 2012  
From Staff and Commissioners!*



The deadline for submission for the February 2012 issue is January 31, 2012. Send e-mail submissions to [dhr.dsci@iowa.gov](mailto:dhr.dsci@iowa.gov)

If you would like to post your events on our calendar, please send an e-mail to [dhr.dsci@iowa.gov](mailto:dhr.dsci@iowa.gov).

Visit the DSCI website: <http://www.state.ia.us/government/dhr/ds/index.html>

Questions or Comments?

Email us at [dhr.dsci@iowa.gov](mailto:dhr.dsci@iowa.gov) or call 515-281-3164 V/TTY or Toll-Free: 1-888-221-3724 V/TTY